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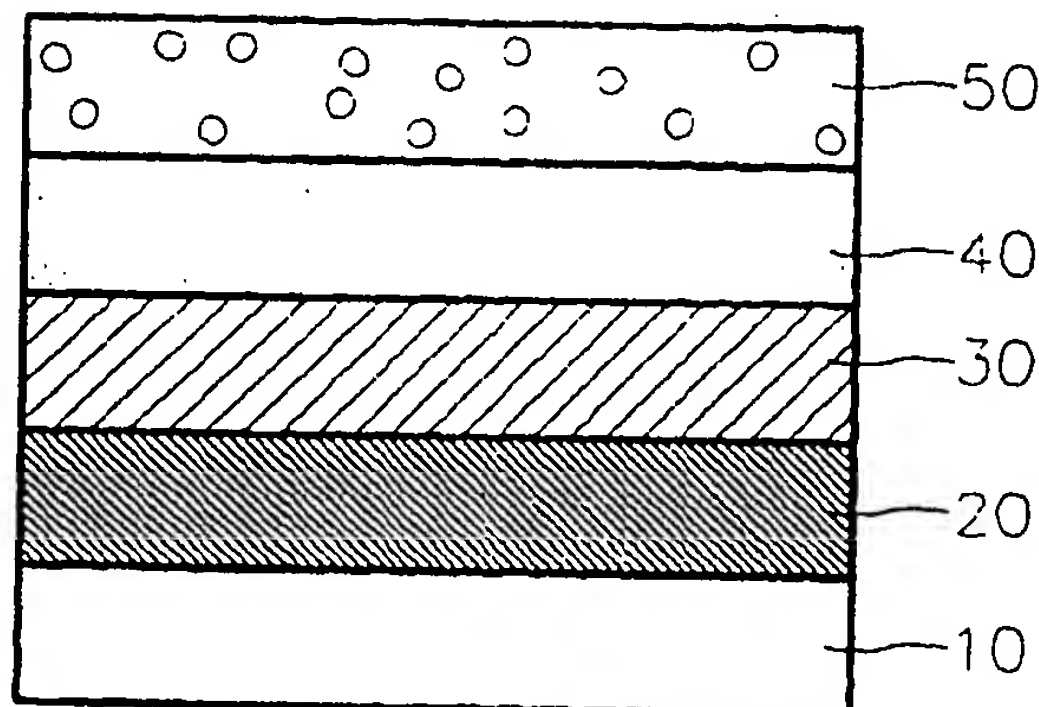
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### (54) An optical recording medium

(57) An optical recording medium is provided which includes a substrate (10) having pregrooves, and a metal recording layer (20), a buffering layer (30), a reflecting layer (40) and a protecting layer (50), which are sequentially stacked on the substrate, wherein the buffering layer is formed of an organic material having a low light

absorption with respect to a laser beam of 600~800nm, such that light absorption ( $k$ ) is less than or equal to 1.0 at 650nm and the light absorption ( $k$ ) is less than or equal to 0.1 at 780nm. In this manner, the optical recording medium can be compatible with a compact disc (CD) and have a high reflectivity at longer wavelength than 600nm.

FIG. 1



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## Description

The present invention relates to an optical recording medium, and more particularly, to an optical recording medium which is compatible with a compact disc (CD) and has a high reflectivity at longer wavelength than 600nm, and in and from which information can be recorded and reproduced by a digital versatile disc player (DVDP) and a compact disc player (CDP).

The recording area per recording unit of an optical recording medium is smaller than that of a conventional magnetic recording medium, so that the optical recording medium has been used as a high density recording medium. The optical recording medium is classified into read only memory (ROM) type which only reproduces already recorded information, write once read many (WORM) type which is recordable just once and readable many times, and rewritable type which is recordable, erasable and rewritable. The information recorded in the optical recording medium should be reproduced by a player for the ROM type medium. To this end, the optical recording medium must satisfy a conventional standardization rule (RED BOOK), so that reflectivity of 65% or more and carrier-to-noise ratio (CNR) of 47dB or more are required.

In a recordable optical recording medium, the recorded information can be reproduced based on the change of the reflectivity which caused by a physical modification, phase change or change of a magnetic property in a recording layer before and after the recording. Also, for making the optical recording medium compatible with a CD, a long-term data storing property and a high recording density are required as well as the above high reflectivity and CNR characteristic. In order to improve the characteristic of the optical recording medium and make easy the manufacturing process, various optical recording media being formed of various materials have been suggested, and a part of them is being in practical use.

As a conventional optical recording medium, Japanese Laid-open Patent Publication No. showha 63-268142 discloses a recording medium having a structure in which a sensitizing layer formed of gelatin, casein or polyvinyl alcohol (PVA), and a metal thin film as a recording layer formed of chromium (Cr), nickel (Ni) or gold (Au) are sequentially stacked on a substrate. According to the optical recording principle of the recording medium, the metal thin film absorbs heat of an irradiated laser beam, and thus the sensitizing layer and the metal thin film are deformed to form a recording pit. However, the recording pit of this recording medium is exposed so that it is difficult to store the recorded information for a long-term.

U.S. Patent No. 4,983,440 discloses a recording medium having a structure in which two metal thin films as a recording layer, and a protecting layer for protecting the recording layer are sequentially stacked on a substrate. However, this recording medium has a very low

reflectivity of about 20% and requires a high-power light source for the practical use. Also, the recording medium cannot be compatible with a conventional CD.

According to U.S. Patent No. 5,328,813, a metal thin film as a recording layer is formed on a substrate, and a hard metal oxide layer is formed on the metal thin film to increase an information storing property and the reflectivity to 40~69%. However, the CNR is still low.

Also, U.S. Patent No. 5,155,723 discloses a recording medium having a structure in which an organic dye layer as a recording layer is stacked on a substrate, and a reflecting layer and a protecting layer are stacked on the recording layer. According to the recording medium, the dye layer absorbs a recording laser beam for a recording to emit heat. Also, the substrate is heated and deformed by the heating, so that a recorded signal can be reproduced based on the difference of the reflectivity according to the recording. Here, the reflectivity of the recording medium is 70% or more and the CNR after recording is 47dB or more to be compatible with the CD. However, the recording layer of the recording medium has low resistance against heat and light, and the manufacturing costs are high due to the expensive organic dye. Also, a spin coating is performed during the manufacturing process with an organic dye dispersion. However, the thickness of the coating layer must be accurately controlled with a deviation of  $\pm 3\%$  or less during the manufacturing of an optical disc since the reflectivity is dependent on the thickness of the coating layer. Also, a costly equipment is required and the productivity is low.

It is an object of the present invention to provide an optical recording medium having 65% or more reflectivity at 780nm to be compatible with a compact disc (CD), 40% or more reflectivity at 630~660nm, and 47dB or more carrier-to-noise ratio (CNR) to be replayable by a digital versatile disc player (DVDP).

According to the present invention, there is provided an optical recording medium comprising: a substrate having pregrooves; and a metal recording layer, a buffering layer and a reflecting layer which are sequentially stacked on the substrate, wherein the buffering layer is formed of an organic material having a low light absorption with respect to a laser beam of 600~800nm, such that light absorption (coefficient  $k$  of the imaginary part of the complex refractive index  $(n-ki)$ ) is less than or equal to 1.0 at 650nm and the light absorption is less than or equal to 0.1 at 780nm.

Preferably, the refractive index (coefficient  $n$  of the real part of a complex refractive index) of the organic material of the buffering layer is greater than or equal to 1.7, the thermal decomposition temperature of the organic material of the buffering layer is 100~300°C, and the difference between a thermal decomposition temperature and a melting temperature is less than or equal to 80°C.

Examples of the present invention will now be described in detail with reference to the accompanying

drawings, in which:

FIG. 1 is a sectional view showing the structure of an optical disc according to a preferred embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. 2 is a sectional view showing a recorded portion and a non-recorded portion formed in the optical disc of FIG. 1;

FIG. 3 is a graph showing the change of reflectivity according to the thickness of a buffering layer of the optical disc of FIG. 1; and

FIG. 4 is a graph showing the relationship between CNR and recording power in the optical disc of FIG. 1.

Referring to FIG. 1 showing the structure of an optical recording medium according to a preferred embodiment of the present invention, the optical recording medium includes a substrate 10, and a metal recording layer 20, a buffering layer 30, a reflecting layer 40 and a protecting layer 50 which are sequentially stacked on the substrate 10.

In the optical recording medium having the above structure, the metal recording layer 20 is heated by a laser beam during an optical recording, and the heat is transferred to the substrate 10 and the buffering layer 30. A region of the substrate 10, adjacent to the heated region of the metal recording layer 20, is expanded and deformed, and the heated region of the metal recording layer 20 is swelled out toward the buffering layer 30 by the expanding force of the substrate.

FIG. 2 is a sectional view showing a recorded portion and a non-recorded portion in detail, which are formed in the optical recording medium according to the present invention. As shown in FIG. 2, in the recorded portion, the metal recording layer generates heat by absorbing a laser beam, the substrate is swelled up and the buffering layer is deformed by heat, so that the reflecting layer may be also deformed. Here, the degree of deformation is proportional to the heat generated from the metal recording layer and dependent on the components and thickness of the metal recording layer and the buffering layer.

In the optical recording medium of the present invention, the reflectivity of the recorded portion is lower than that of the non-recorded portion, causing reflectivity difference between the recorded portion and the non-recorded portion, wherein the reflectivity difference makes possible the recording and playback. Here, the reflectivity of the recorded portion is lowered than that of the non-recorded portion by the following principles.

First, the lower reflectivity in the recorded portion is due to a Fabry-Perot effect by the change in thickness of the buffering layer. That is, if the substrate 10 is swelled out by a recording laser, the thickness of the buffering layer 30 becomes thin to  $d_2$  after recording from  $d_1$  before recording. Here, the reflectivity is varied according to the thickness of the buffering layer as

shown in FIG. 3, so that the reflectivity of the recorded portion decreases. Also, the decreased reflectivity depends on the metal layer thickness.

Second, the initial buffer layer thickness  $d_1$  is optimized for the complex refractive index  $n-ki$  of the buffer layer to have the maximum reflectivity. If a portion of the thin metal film 20 is heated by absorbing the irradiated recording light, the temperature of the portion sharply increases. As a result, the material of the buffering layer 30 is damaged by the heat and the optical characteristics thereof are changed to  $n'-k'i$ , causing difference of optical paths between the non-recorded portion and the recorded portion. Thus, the reflectivity of the recorded portion decreases.

Third, the reflectivity of the recorded portion is decreased by destructive interference between a reflective light  $R_g$  reflected from the pregrooves of substrate and a reflective light  $R_1$  reflected from the land side. Referring to FIG. 2, the initial pregroove depth  $dg^1$  is enough to cause constructive interference between the reflective light  $R_g$  and the reflective light  $R_1$ . However, after recording using a recording laser, the substrate 10 and the metal recording layer 20 are expanded toward the buffering layer 30, so that the pregroove depth of substrate is decreased to  $dg^2$ . As a result, the depth of the pregroove is decreased, thereby causing the destructive interference between the reflective lights  $R_g$  and  $R_1$ . Thus, the destructive interference occurs in the recorded portion after the irradiation of light to decrease the reflectivity while the constructive interference occurs in the non-recorded portion.

In order to obtain a high CNR using the above phenomenon, the thickness and material of the buffering layer must be appropriately optimized. That is, the heat generating phenomenon by absorbing the laser beam, as a source of forming a recording pit (deformation of the substrate), is mainly responsible to the metal recording layer. Thus, the buffering layer is formed of a material having low absorption at an usable wavelength to decrease the heat generation by the buffering layer. As a result, the buffering layer can be easily deformed, and a high reflectivity can be achieved.

To the ends, the material for the buffering layer should have coefficient  $n$  of the real part of the complex refractive index that is greater than or equal to 1.7 to increase the reflectivity difference before and after the recording (Here, the refractive index means a complex refractive index expressed by " $n-ki$ ", wherein  $n$  is a coefficient of the real part and  $k$  is a coefficient of the imaginary part, and  $k=0$  at a wavelength without absorption). Also, preferably, the thermal decomposition temperature of the material for the buffering layer is  $100\sim 300^\circ\text{C}$ , and the difference between the thermal decomposition temperature and a melting temperature is less than or equal to  $80^\circ\text{C}$ . In the aspect of the absorption, preferably, the material for the buffering layer has a low absorption ( $k$ ) at  $600\sim 800\text{nm}$  wavelength of a laser beam, such that light absorption ( $k$ ) at  $650\text{nm}$  is less



than or equal to 1.0, and the light absorption ( $k$ ) at 780nm is less than or equal to 0.1. If the difference of the thermal decomposition temperature and the melting temperature exceeds 80°C, the buffering layer is easily melted to damage the land side of the recorded portion, thereby deteriorating the characteristics of optical signal.

Hereinafter, each constituent of an example of an optical recording medium of the present invention will be described in detail.

In the present invention, the substrate 10 is formed of a material which is transparent to a laser beam and capable of being easily expanded and deformed at 80~200°C, and has excellent impact intensity. As a material for satisfying the above conditions, polycarbonate, polymethylmethacrylate (PMMA), epoxy resin, polyester or amorphous polyolefin is used. Preferably, a material having glass transition temperature of 100~200°C is used. Also, pregrooves for guiding an incident laser beam during the recording or playback are formed, wherein the depth of the pregroove is preferably 50~300nm. If the depth of the pregroove is less than 50nm, after recording the reflectivity greatly increases by the expansion of the substrate, so that much noise is included in a recorded signal. On the contrary, if the depth of the pregroove exceeds 300nm, the groove image of the buffer layer is too deep, thereby decreasing the reflectivity. Also, it is difficult to obtain a buffering layer having an even surface by a spin coating.

The metal recording layer 20 acts as a heat generating layer by absorbing a laser beam and a partial mirror for providing a contrast difference before and after recording. In the optical characteristic of the metal of the recording layer, preferably, the metal has 0.01 or more of the coefficient  $k$  of the imaginary part of a complex refractive index. If the coefficient  $k$  is less than 0.01, the light absorption is low during the recording, so that the recorded portion is less deformed, thereby lowering a recording sensitivity.

Also, preferably, the metal recording layer 20 have 30~300Å thickness, 5~95% transmittance and 5~95% reflectivity. If the thickness is 30Å or less, amount of heat generated by the light absorption for the recording is not sufficient to deform the substrate. On the contrary, if the thickness thereof exceeds 300Å, the expansion of the substrate for the recording is hindered by the metal recording layer, so that the recorded portion is less deformed. Also, with the increase of the metal layer, thermal conductivity of the metal is increased to damage the land side, which results in deterioration of signal. Also, scattering of the light is increased, so that it is difficult to obtain a high reflectivity.

Preferably, the thermal conductivity of the metal recording layer 20 is 4W/cm·°C or less. If the thermal conductivity of the metal recording layer exceeds 4W/cm·°C, it is difficult for the recording layer itself to be heated to a predetermined temperature since the heat of the recording layer, generated by absorbing a laser

beam is rapidly diffused to the circumstance. Even though the recording layer is heated to the intended temperature, adjacent tracks may be deformed since the size of the recording pit is increased.

Also, it is preferable that the thermal linear expansion coefficient of the metal recording layer is equal to or greater than  $3 \times 10^{-6}/^{\circ}\text{C}$ . If the linear expansion coefficient is less than the level, the metal recording layer is cracked by the expansion of the substrate during the recording, so that a good recorded signal value cannot be obtained.

To satisfy the above conditions, it is preferable that the metal recording layer is formed of gold (Au), aluminum (Al), chromium (Cr), titanium (Ti), copper (Cu), nickel (Ni), platinum (Pt), silver (Ag), tantalum (Ta), iron (Fe) or alloys thereof using a vacuum deposition, electron beam (E-beam) or sputtering method.

In the present invention, the buffering layer 30 has a thickness of 50~1,000nm, and is deformed by the deformation of the substrate 10 and the metal recording layer. Accordingly, the shape of an interface between the deformed buffering layer and reflecting layer is changed, thereby maximizing the reflectivity change by the recording. Thus, generally, the buffering layer is formed of a material capable of being easily deformed by the heat transferred from the metal recording layer and its own direct absorption of light energy. However, in the present invention, a material having a low light absorption at the above-described available wavelength of 600~800nm is used to minimize the direct absorption of the light energy by the buffering layer for high reflectivity. In detail, as a material of the buffering layer 30, an organic material satisfying the following characteristics is used: that is, a material having solubility of 0.5g/10ml or more in solvents without damage to the substrate, thermal decomposition temperature of 100~300°C for excellent recording sensitivity, difference of 80°C or less between the decomposition and melting temperature for good deformation of the buffering layer, complex refractive index (coefficient  $n$  of the real part of the complex refractive index) which is greater than or equal to 1.7 at the initial state for increasing a contrast of a recorded signal, and a low light absorption at 600~800nm for a high reflectivity at the same wavelength.

The buffering layer is formed of an organic material satisfying the above conditions, such as aromatic compound, aliphatic compound, amide compound, ester compound, urea, amine, sulfur compound, hydroxy compound or mixtures thereof. In particular, the buffering layer is preferably formed of at least one dye selected from the group consisting of anthraquinone, dioxadine, triphenodithiazine, phenanthrene, cyanine, phthalocyanine, naphthalocyanine, merocyanine, pyrylium, xanthine, triphenylmethane, croconium, azo, indigoid, methine, azulene, squarium, sulfide and methal dithiolate.

The organic material may be mixed with a polymer

resin to improve the property related to the spin-coating. Here, preferably, the polymer resin content is 50wt% or less based on the weight of the organic material. The polymer resin may include vinylalcohol resin, vinylacetate resin, acrylate resin, polyester resin, polyether resin, polystyrene resin, polyurethane resin, cellulose resin and fatty acid resin.

In the present invention, the buffering layer is formed by a general method using the above-described material. For example, the above-described material of the buffering layer is dissolved in an organic solvent, and then the obtained solution is spin-coated on the metal recording layer 20. Here, there is no limitation in the organic solvent if an organic solvent is capable of easily dissolving the material of the buffering layer without damage to the substrate.

The reflecting layer 40 is formed of a general method. For example, the reflecting layer 40 is formed of gold (Au), aluminum (Al), copper (Cu), chromium (Cr), nickel (Ni), platinum (Pt), silver (Ag), tantalum (Ta), titanium (Ti), iron (Fe) or alloys thereof to a thickness of 500~2,500Å by an E-beam or sputtering method.

The protecting layer protects other constituent layers of the optical recording medium. The protecting layer 50 is formed by a general method. For example, the protecting layer 50 is formed by spin-coating on the reflecting layer 40 an epoxyacrylate resin which is transparent and curable by ultraviolet rays, and has a great impact intensity, and then curing the spin-coated product by irradiating ultraviolet rays.

Hereinafter, the present invention will be described in detail with reference to the following examples. However, the present invention is not limited to the following examples.

#### Example 1

A nickel (Ni) recording layer was vacuum-deposited to 4nm thickness on a polycarbonate (PC) substrate with 1.2mm thickness having pregrooves with 190nm depth, 0.8μm width at the uppermost portion thereof, 0.22μm width at the bottom thereof and 1.6μm track pitch. Then, a coating solution obtained by dissolving 0.85g red dye (CVS-300, ICI, U.K., absorption (*k*) of 0 at 780nm, absorption (*k*) of 0.43 at 650nm) having thermal decomposition temperature of 200°C and melting temperature of 240°C in 10ml diacetone alcohol (DAA) was spin-coated on the Ni recording layer at 4,000 rpm to form a buffering layer. Here, the thickness of the buffering layer corresponding to the pregroove portion, measured by a scanning electron microscope (SEM), was about 280nm. After drying the resultant structure at 40°C in a vacuum oven, Au was vacuum-deposited to about 1,000Å to form a reflecting layer. Then, an ultraviolet (UV)-curable epoxyacrylate resin was spin-coated on the reflecting layer and then cured to form a protecting layer, resulting in a disc.

According to the result of the evaluation on the ob-

tained disc, using a CD-R tester (OHMT-500, Apex) adopting 780nm laser beam, reflectivity before the recording was 80%, and the maximum reflectivity  $R_{top}$  was 67% and the CNR was 65dB using 0.7mW recording laser power with respect to a disc which was recorded at 1.3m/sec recording speed using 8mW, 720kHz recording power. Under the above recording conditions, a recorded signal of 47dB or more CNR was reproduced at 4mW or more recording power as shown in FIG. 4. Also, after recording an audio signal in the disc using a CD-R recorder (RPD-1000, Pioneers), the recorded audio signal could be reproduced using a CD player (Mark II, Philips). According to the recording characteristics of the disc, evaluated by a CD-CATS (Audio Development Co., Sweden), the evaluated all items satisfied the standard of the CD. Also, the reflectivity of the disc was 51% at the wavelength of 650nm, and information recorded in the disc could be reproduced by a digital versatile disc player (DVDP).

#### Example 2

A disc was manufactured by the same method as that of Example 1, except that the material of the metal recording layer was replaced by CuAl with 6nm thickness, and the performance of the disc was evaluated.

The reflectivity before the recording was 76%, and the maximum reflectivity  $R_{top}$  was 62% and the CNR was 57dB. Also, the reflectivity at 650nm was 51%. Also, after recording an audio signal in the disc, the recorded audio signal could be reproduced using a CDP and a DVDP.

#### Example 3

A disc was manufactured by the same method as that of Example 1, except that the material of the metal recording layer was replaced by Ta with 5nm thickness, and the performance of the disc was evaluated.

According to the result of the performance evaluation, the reflectivity before the recording was 76%, and the maximum reflectivity  $R_{top}$  was 65% and the CNR was 62dB, and the reflectivity at 650nm was 53%. After recording an audio signal in the disc using a CD-R recorder, the recorded audio signal could be reproduced using a CDP and a DVDP.

#### Example 4

A disc was manufactured by the same method as that of Example 1, except that the material of the reflecting layer was replaced by Al with 100nm thickness, and the performance of the disc was evaluated.

According to the result of the performance evaluation, the reflectivity before the recording was 77%, and the maximum reflectivity  $R_{top}$  was 65% and the CNR was 62dB, and the reflectivity at 650nm was 51%. After recording an audio signal in the disc using a CD-R re-

corder, the recorded audio signal could be reproduced using a CDP and a DVDP.

#### Example 5

A disc was manufactured by the same method as that of Example 1, except that a solution obtained by dissolving 0.95g NK-1532 (Japanese photosensitive dye) and 0.05g L-04 (Japanese photosensitive dye) in 10ml diacetone alcohol (DAA) was used to form a buffering layer. In the solution for the buffering layer, refractive index  $n$  and absorption ( $k$ ) at 780nm were 1.85 and 0.024, respectively, and those at 650nm were 2.05 and 0.03, respectively. After recording a music, the recorded music could be reproduced by a CDP and a DVDP. The maximum reflectivity  $R_{top}$  at 780nm was 66%, and the reflectivity at 650nm was 43%.

#### Comparative Example 1

A disc was manufactured by the same method as that of Example 1, except that the material of a buffering layer was replaced by 0.85g cyanine dye S-04 (Nippon Kanko Shikiso Kenkusho Co., Ltd.) having refractive index  $n$  of 2.5 and absorption ( $k$ ) of 0 at 780nm, and refractive index  $n$  of 1.49 and absorption ( $k$ ) of 1.41 at 650nm, and the performance of the disc was evaluated. Here, the thickness of the buffering layer corresponding to the pregroove portion, measured by a scanning electron microscope (SEM), was about 300nm.

According to the result of the performance evaluation, the reflectivity before the recording was 78%, and the maximum reflectivity  $R_{top}$  was 66% and the CNR was 65dB. Also, after recording an audio signal in the disc using a CD-R recorder (RPD-1000, Pioneers), the recorded audio signal could be reproduced using a CD player (Mark II, Philips). According to the recording characteristics of the disc, evaluated by a CD-CATS, the evaluated all items satisfied the standard of the CD. However, the reflectivity at 650nm was 20%, so that the reproduction by a DVDP was impossible.

#### Comparative Example 2

A disc was manufactured by the same method as that of Example 1, except that the material of a buffering layer was replaced by 0.80g T-043 dye (Nippon Kayaku Co., Ltd.) having thermal decomposition temperature of 215°C and melting temperature of 125°C, and the performance of the disc was evaluated.

According to the result of the performance evaluation, the reflectivity before the recording was 79%, and the maximum reflectivity  $R_{top}$  was 65% and the CNR was 45dB. Also, after recording an audio signal in the disc using a CD-R recorder (RPD-1000, Pioneers), the recorded audio signal could not be reproduced using a CD player (Mark II, Philips). According to the result evaluated by the evaluation equipment used in Example 1,

a land side was seriously deformed.

#### Comparative Example 3

A dye solution obtained by dissolving 4.4g N,N'-2,5-cyclohexadien-1,4-diylidenbis[4-(dibutylamino)-N-[4-(dibutylamino)phenyl]-bis[(OC-6-11)-hexafluoro-anlimonate(10)] (NK-3219, Nippon Kanko Shinko Kenkusho CO., Ltd.,  $\lambda_{max}$ =720nm, refractive index  $n$  of 2.28 at 780nm, absorption ( $k$ ) of 0.024 at 780nm, refractive index  $n$  of 1.18 at 650, and absorption ( $k$ ) of 1.31 at 650nm) in 100ml DAA was deposited on a polycarbonate (PC) substrate with 1.2mm thickness having pre-grooves with 153nm depth, 0.8 $\mu$ m width at the uppermost portion thereof, 0.25 $\mu$ m width at the bottom thereof and 1.6 $\mu$ m track pitch, by a spin coater at 50rpm for 5 seconds, at 1,500rpm for 15 seconds, at 4,000rpm for 30 seconds in sequence, and then fully dried. Then, an Au reflecting layer was formed to 100nm thickness using a sputter. After depositing a UV-curable resin on the Au reflective layer, the resultant structure was cured by irradiating UV to form a protecting layer with 10 $\mu$ m thickness, thereby resulting in a disc. The maximum reflectivity  $R_{top}$  was 66%, and the CNR was 65dB using 0.7mW laser with respect to a disc which was recorded at 1.3m/sec recording speed using 8mW, 720kHz recording power. Also, the reproduction by a DVDP was impossible.

As described above, the optical recording medium of the present invention can be compatible with a CD by appropriately selecting the material for the buffering layer, has a high reflectivity at a wavelength of 600nm or higher, thereby providing a desirable CNR characteristic. Also, a dye is scarcely used, so that the manufacturing costs are lowered with high productivity.

#### Claims

1. An optical recording medium comprising:
  - a substrate (10) having pregrooves; and
  - a metal recording layer (20), a buffering layer (30) and a reflecting layer (40) which are sequentially stacked on the substrate (10), wherein the buffering layer (30) is formed of an organic material having a low light absorption with respect to a laser beam of 600-800nm, such that the light absorption ( $k$ ) is less than or equal to 1.0 at 650nm and the light absorption ( $k$ ) is less than or equal to 0.1 at 780nm.
2. The optical recording medium of claim 1, wherein the thermal decomposition temperature of the organic material of the buffering layer (30) is 100~300°C.
3. The optical recording medium of claim 2, wherein



the difference between a thermal decomposition temperature and a melting temperature is less than or equal to 80°C.

4. The optical recording medium of any preceding claim, wherein the refractive index (coefficient  $n$  of the real part of a complex refractive index) of the organic material of the buffering layer (30) is greater than or equal to 1.7. 5
5. The optical recording medium of any preceding claim, wherein the organic material comprises at least one selected from the group consisting of aromatic compound, aliphatic compound, amide compound, ester compound, urea, amine, sulfur compound, hydroxy compound or mixtures thereof. 10
6. The optical recording medium of claim 5, wherein the organic material is at least a dye selected from the group consisting of anthraquinone, dioxadine, triphenodithiazine, phenanthrene, cyanine, phthalocyanine, naphthalocyanine, merocyanine, pyrylium, xanthine, triphenylmethane, croconium, azo, indigoid, methine, azulene, squarium, sulfide and methal dithiolate. 15
7. The optical recording medium of any preceding claim, wherein the buffering layer (30) includes 50wt% or less of polymer based on the weight of the organic material. 20
8. The optical recording medium of claim 7, wherein the polymer comprises at least one selected from the group consisting of vinylalcohol resin, vinylacetate resin, acrylate resin, polyester resin, polyether resin, polystyrene resin, polyurethane resin, cellulose resin and fatty acid resin. 25
9. The optical recording medium of any preceding claim, wherein the thickness of the buffering layer (30) is 50~1,000nm. 30
10. The optical recording medium of any preceding claim, wherein a protecting layer (50) is formed on the reflecting layer. 35
11. The optical recording medium of any preceding claim, wherein the reflectivity of the optical recording medium is 40% or more at 600~800nm. 40
12. The optical recording medium of any preceding claim, wherein the depth of the pregroove formed in the substrate (10) is 50~300nm. 45
13. The optical recording medium of any preceding claim, wherein at least one of the substrates (10) and the metal recording layer (20), and the buffering layer (30) has a deformed portion. 50

14. The optical recording medium of claim 13, wherein the substrate (10) and the metal recording layer (20) have the deformed portion, and a portion of the buffering layer (30) corresponding to the deformed portion has a reduced thickness.
15. The optical recording medium of claim 13, wherein the substrate (10) and the metal recording layer (20), and the buffering layer (30) have the deformed portions corresponding to each other.
16. The optical recording medium of claim 15, wherein the reflecting layer (40) has a deformed portion corresponding to the deformed portion of the buffering layer (30).
17. The optical recording medium of any preceding claim, wherein the thickness of the metal recording layer (20) is 30~300Å.
18. The optical recording medium of any preceding claim, wherein the metal recording layer (20) comprises a metal having a coefficient  $k$  of the imaginary part of a complex refractive index, which is greater than or equal to 0.01.
19. The optical recording medium of claim 18, wherein the metal recording layer (20) comprises a metal selected from the group consisting of gold (Au), aluminum (Al), chromium (Cr), titanium (Ti), copper (Cu), nickel (Ni), platinum (Pt), silver (Ag), tantalum (Ta), iron (Fe) and alloys thereof.

FIG. 1

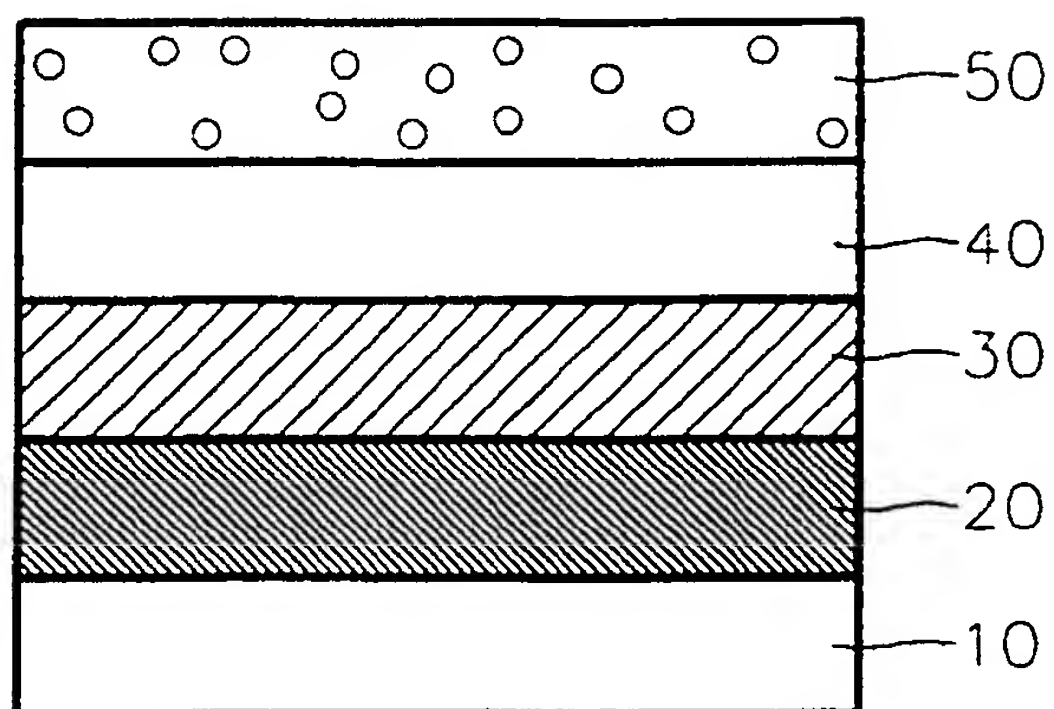


FIG. 2

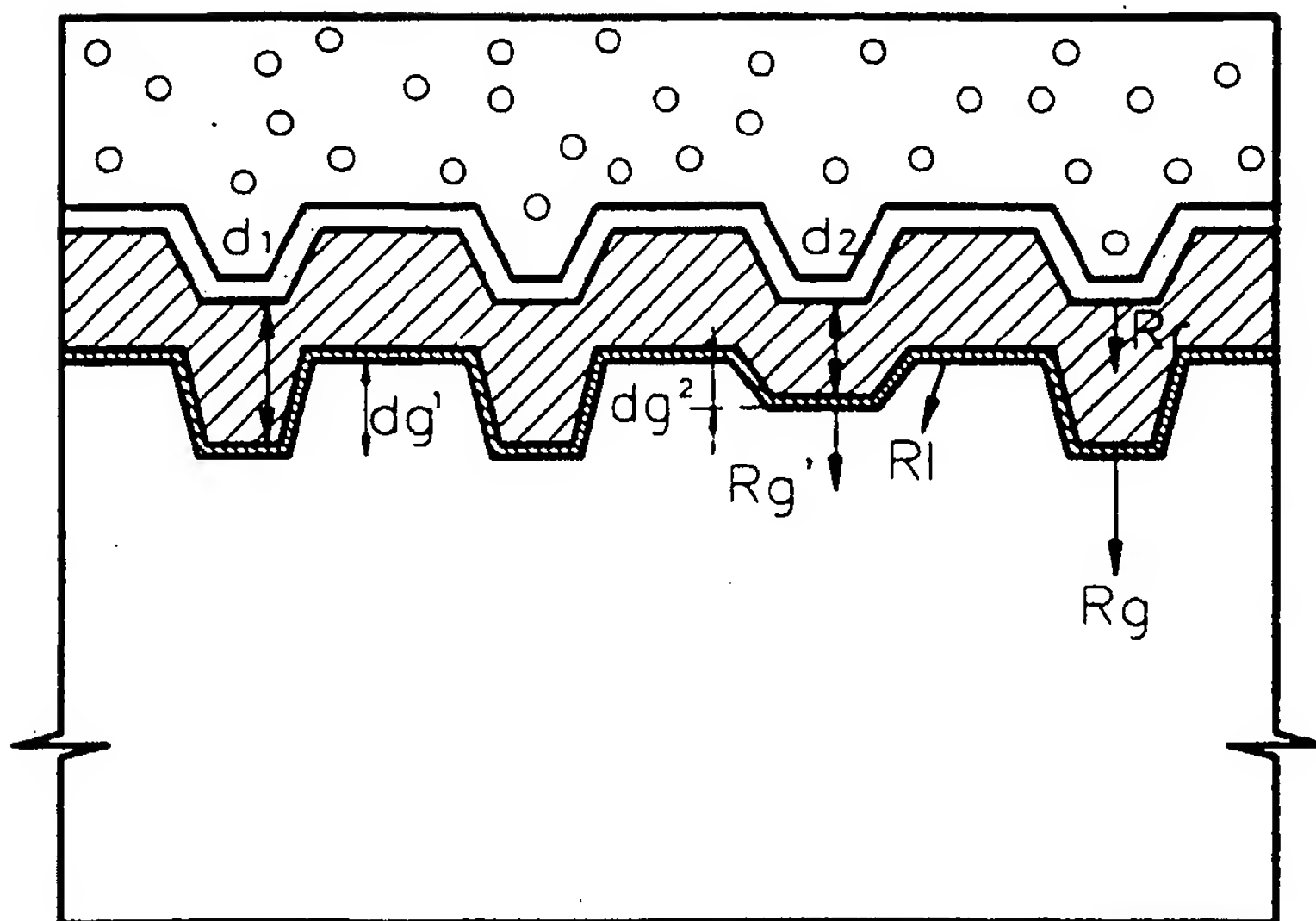




FIG. 3

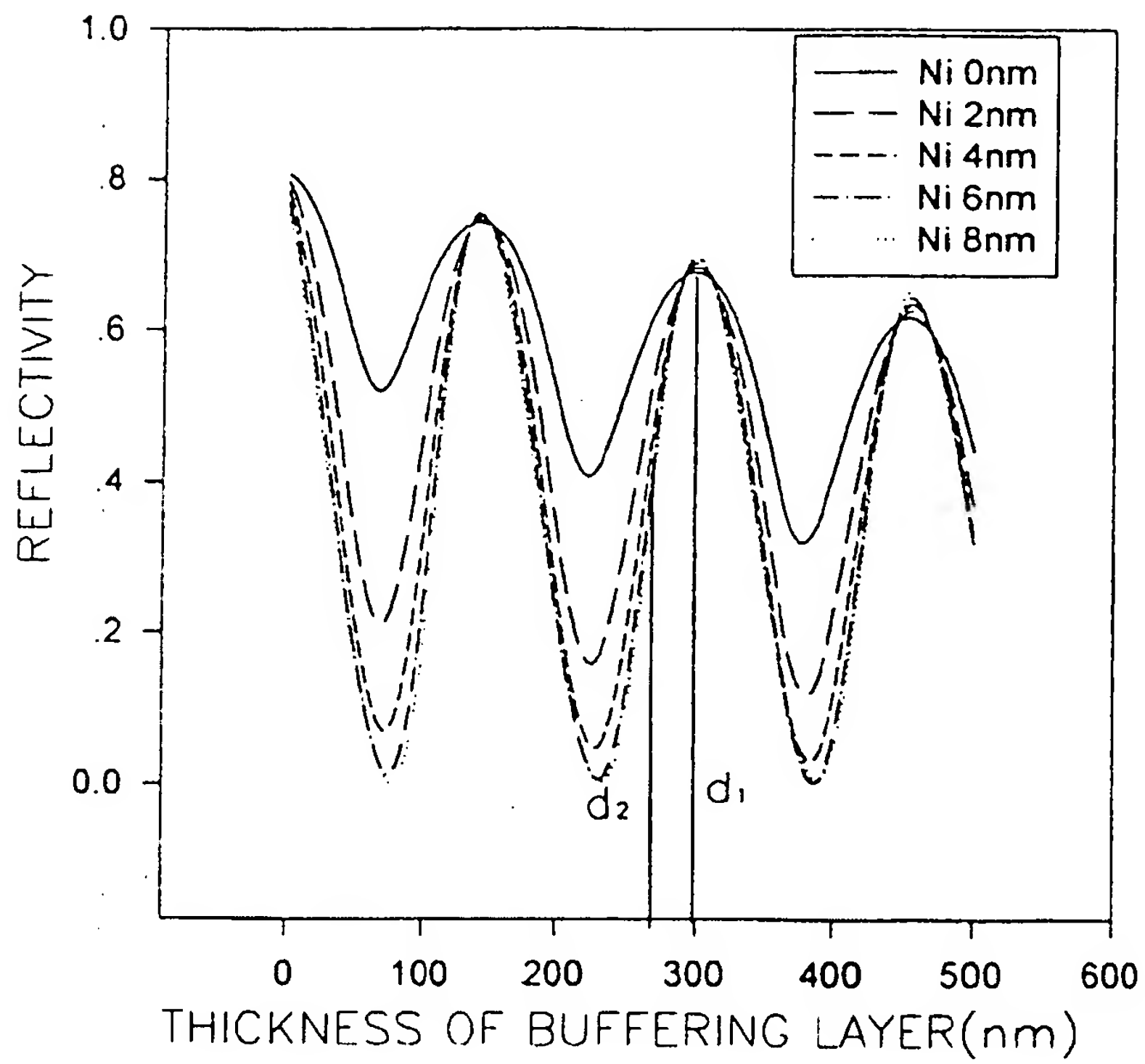
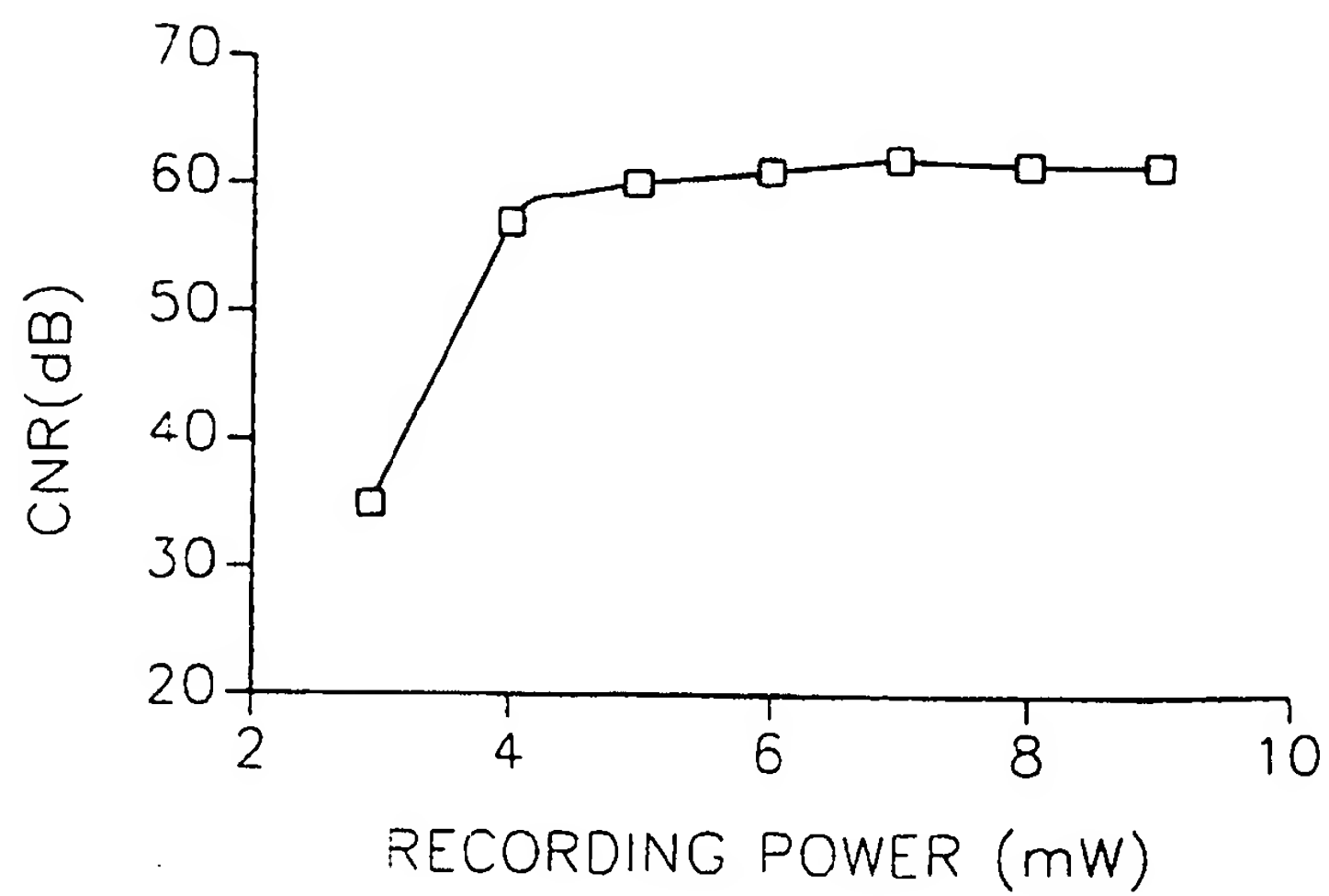


FIG. 4





European Patent  
Office

# EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number  
EP 97 30 6218

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int.Cl.6)
P, X	EP 0 777 224 A (SAMSUNG) * claims 1-18; figures 6,7; examples 9-13 *	1.9-19	G11B7/24
X	EP 0 130 329 A (IBM) * page 9, line 3 - line 19; figure 1 * * page 10, line 5 - line 21 * * page 12, line 9 - line 13 * * page 13, line 8 * * page 15, line 1 - line 11 * ---	1	
A	EP 0 474 311 A (HITACHI) * claims 1,24; examples 4,5 * ---	1	
A	EP 0 317 696 A (TAIYO YUDEN) * claims 6,7 *	1.6	
A	PATENT ABSTRACTS OF JAPAN vol. 15, no. 192 (P-1202), 17 May 1991 & JP 03 046136 A (TOPPAN PRINTING), 27 February 1991, * abstract *	1.6	
A	PATENT ABSTRACTS OF JAPAN vol. 14, no. 494 (P-1123), 26 October 1990 & JP 02 201748 A (MATSUSHITA), 9 August 1990, * abstract *	1.6	
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search THE HAGUE		Date of completion of the search 16 January 1998	Examiner Vanhecke, H
<p>CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS</p> <p>X particularly relevant taken alone Y particularly relevant taken combined with another document of the same category A technological background O non-written disclosure P intermediate document</p> <p>I theory or principle underlying the invention E earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D document cited in the application L document cited for other reasons A member of the same patent family corresponding document</p>			

EPO FORM 1503 (3.82) (P4/C01)